

## **Changes to Virtual Private Network (VPN) Access to Secure Networks**

The UNH Virtual Private Network (VPN) will be updated in October to enable features to verify that individual computers accessing secure networks have basic security installed, such as anti-virus protection. UNH IT is currently testing these changes. Communication to the university community will begin in late September. We ask for your review of the rationale for this change and provide feedback that would help our efforts to assure the university community is aware of the potential impact of these changes.

The UNH network is managed in an open style that supports the experimental and exploratory nature of the activities of the university. However, increasing compliance and liability concerns prompted the segregation of certain services into more managed, secure networks. Such services include access to human resource, payroll, and other institutional data. These networks utilize a VPN to allow for user access via a Pulse VPN client add-on known as “Host Checker.”

Currently, the Pulse client is used to vet secure network access by users’ rights to a network. A limitation of this approach is that the security of the network is subject to the general health of the computer used to access it. If an individual computer is vulnerable, that makes the network the computer is accessing vulnerable. To improve security, “Host Checker” will be used to check for certain security features of the computers accessing secure networks, for example, that the computer has up-to-date virus protection installed.

Only users who access secure networks, for example, BANNER Finance users, will be impacted by this change to “Host Checker.” Users who only access the general campus network (for email, files shares, etc.) should not be affected. However, there is potential impact to those who have infrequent or sporadic use, such as users who approve timesheets.

It is important to insure a level of desktop computer health for our secure networks. This is all the more critical as the university moves forward with

inter-connecting the secure networks throughout the University System. Granite State College, Keene State College, and Plymouth State University operate a much more managed desktop environment. Given that our VPN users have the potential to reach these institutions' secure networks, it is important that we can provide some assurance that computers with access to their systems are healthy.

UNH IT appreciates your feedback on this message. Please send your input to [Bryan.Scovill@unh.edu](mailto:Bryan.Scovill@unh.edu). Thank you for your support.